

Chinese Self healing Methods For Health & Longevity



By Master Wang Xin-wu, China

Martial art is a Chinese national sport. It is also to be reassured by all people of the world. Martial arts have both attack and defence, and these movements need to be placed in sequence to create a style. Sex, age, location, seasons or weapons do not govern martial art. The purpose of martial art is to toughen your bones and muscles for defence, and to improve your intelligence and mental attitude. Because peoples of the world are now exchanging in cultures and martial artists have similar interests, friendships are being formed of mutual benefit to all concerned.

T'ai chi is one style of martial art. There are five different versions. The most popular versions in China are the Chen and Yang styles. The Yang style is very relaxed, smooth and slow, with internal strength. It is suitable for the old, the weak or those suffering from illness.

The author of this book, Erie Montaigne, brought the Australian Kung Fu Association to visit Yinchuan City, Ningxia, to see the Chinese Martial Arts Tournament in May 1985. Master Montaigne gave a demonstration which was very well received by the audience, and the local newspaper and television station interviewed him. He is well remembered by the Chinese people since this time.

I saw Master Montaigne's Yang style T'ai chi demonstration. His toi sou (pushing hands), ch'i and style, were very professional and close to perfection. I appreciate his knowledge. I know Mr. Montaigne has introduced T'ai chi to Australia and the Pacific area with excellent results.

I am one of the direct descendants to inherit Yang style T'ai chi. I have written a book of 48 techniques and I am also a Chinese T'ai chi champion. Mr. Montaigne and I have built a very good friendship because of our love of T'ai chi, and we are both close to the same age. We both have beards and curly hair and have both worked on films. Our friendship is not only on a personal basis; I would hope for it to cement a friendship between Australia and China.

I wish Master Montaigne every success in his business and I wish T'ai chi in Australia national success.

I hope we can group together to improve the standard of martial arts. I send my special regards to martial arts devotees in Australia and the Pacific region.

Meditation

The road to real health begins with the mind. Many people start out with good intentions; perhaps the incentive is a heart attack, or something more basic like seeing themselves as they really are. Usually they go on a crash diet and embark on a heavy exercise programme. If they don't kill themselves by the time they have lost weight they are too sick to enjoy it. Usually the 'fad' only lasts for a short while and the 'cravings' come back with a vengeance – so the patient is sicker than before because of the shock the system has sustained.

The only tool we have to make us stick to our intentions is the mind. Unfortunately the mind is usually in the same condition as the rest of the system through bad eating habits, bad thinking habits (aggravated by bad eating habits) and bad exercise habits. We need something to heal the mind first so that the mind can heal the body.

The area that influences the mind is the way we live. Tension created by just living in the twentieth century is the greatest cause of ill health, and not many doctors realise this. We may be given a pill to ease the tension, but this does nothing to attack the cause of the tension and so the disease grows.

Around our bodies we have channels called meridians through which energy flows, something like the vessels through which the blood flows. All eastern philosophies of health talk of such a flow. The Indians talk of prana, the Japanese call it ki, the Chinese call it ch'i, we call it electricity or life-force. The fact that it exists is not the question for most western scientists now know of such a force. What is not known is how to keep a plentiful supply and how to keep the channels open.

What is needed is some way to train the mind not to allow tension to affect us. Whether the tension is psychological or physical it has the same effect on the body's energy. If the body's energy flow is interrupted or slowed down our natural healing systems are unable to cope with normal external attacks.

Tension, more than anything else, affects the flow of ch'i by closing the channels. Through the miracle of television cameras we can actually see the stomach contracting and unable to digest when the person is placed under stress or even thinks about being angry. The same things happen to the acupuncture meridians; they contract, allowing only a small amount of ch'i to flow to all parts of body. This can be used to great advantage by a trained martial artist; it is possible to strike certain parts of the body when the most ch'i is flowing through that area, to cause immediate great tension, thus closing the meridian. After some time, perhaps days, the meridian slowly closes completely and the recipient of the blow dies. This is sometimes called the delayed death touch or 'dim-mak'. However, it is said that this practice takes around three lifetimes to learn so not many ever come to such a level.

There is a small gland at the base of the neck running to the sternum. It is called the thymus gland, and in Chinese medicine is said to control the flow of ch'i as well as its physical function of producing anti-bodies. The first gland to be affected by stress is the thymus. The energy system of the body is affected immediately and if left unchecked will lead to the destruction of the body's energy system.

We do gain some relief from stress through sleep, but most of us counteract the benefit by sleeping on soft mattresses and watching television and eating before retiring. We need sleep to recharge our batteries; if we are using energy for digestion or for processing thoughts, we aren't using it to recharge.

If we can find a way to stop stress from affecting us we are on the way to defeating the main cause of disease. We need to develop a calm mind, not always an easy thing to do. Meditation is completely foreign to most westerners, but Chinese exercises do not seem so strange because we are using the body to gain a mind effect.

Levels of meditation

There are three levels of meditation we can practice using movement. There is another, which requires no movement and is common to most forms of Indian yoga. This is where we sit cross-legged and meditate on a mantra or an object. Most westerners find this quite difficult, and can sometimes fool themselves into thinking that they are meditating. Moving meditation, although involving learning certain patterns of movement, can be easier because it does not use mind games. All we have to do is to learn and practice the movements in the correct way and the meditation will happen by itself; the mind will relax, the body will relax and as the body relaxes so too does the mind, and so on.

The first level of moving or 'working' meditation is where we stand in a certain position with slightly bent knees. This is the 'work' part of the meditation. The bent knees provide the heat necessary for certain chemical or energy changes to take place. It is not too difficult to maintain this sort of meditation but it is a little more physically difficult than the sitting kind. We are trying to teach the mind to relax while working. In this way we do not need a nice quiet room with candles in order to relax – we are teaching the mind to relax at all times so that tension does not build up.

The basic stance for this kind of meditation (ch'i kung or Qigong) is seen in photograph 1. The legs are slightly bent with the knees not projecting any further than the toes. The toes are turned under a little, but not enough to make them turn white. The arms are held at chest height with the fingers pointing to each other. The fingers are held slightly apart with the palms concave. The tongue is pressed lightly onto the hard palate with the chin pulled in slightly to straighten the back. The eyes are looking straight ahead but not staring. The shoulders are relaxed with the elbows hanging. The breath is deep but natural and not forced, breathing in through the nose and out through the nose.

This posture is held for at least 15 minutes but beginners can start with 5 minutes. Older people can practice this meditation sitting in a chair.

The second type of meditation is where we start to move while still holding the same relaxed meditative state induced by the Qigong. The slow, natural movements of T'ai chi ch'uan lend themselves to meditation, as there are no fast or jerking movements. The whole set is made up of different postures linked together by circling movements. One is able to keep a relaxed calm mind while performing the T'ai Chi form, which lasts up to one hour.

The movements relax the mind; this causes our movements to become more relaxed and smooth, which in turn helps the mind to relax even more, so the mind and body help each other up the ladder

The third area of meditation is where we learn to perform more normal tasks while still holding the meditation. T'ai chi has another form of exercise called pauchui form, or cannon fist form, and as the name suggests this has some fast and hard movements. This form teaches us to keep our meditation even when confronted with the worst tension out in the street. In practising this form while relaxed we are able to walk out into the big world knowing that nothing will upset us or make us tense. See photograph 3.

Qigong

Qigong, or ch'i kung, translated means breath work or breathing exercises and we can use it to build up our internal energy or ch'i. We need an adequate supply of ch'i to each organ to maintain good health, but just as important is the free flow of this energy through the meridians.

In China there are Qigong clinics where people can go to be treated with Qigong either by a doctor or as a self help exercise. The patient learns the Qigong exercises so that self-healing takes place and this is obviously the best way. If however the patient is in no fit state to perform the exercises, then he must first be treated externally. This involves the doctor 'putting in' his own ch'i into the affected part or into the whole body.

If we are to heal ourselves we need a normal flow of ch'i, but if we are to heal others we need an extra amount of ch'i. This means that we ourselves must be fit and healthy, and apart from building up an extra supply of ch'i, we must also learn how to

put it into others. This is a very simple practice physically but is quite difficult to learn mentally.

In order to heal others with ch'i we must know the meaning of yin and yang and how to cause different parts of the body to become yin or yang by using the mind. Once this is known, usually after many years of practising an internal art such as T'ai chi ch'uan or Taoist yoga, we then have to build up our supply of ch'i and learn how to get it into another person. A Chinese doctor confronted with a mild disease will stand in a Qigong posture for around 10 minutes to build up his immediate supply of ch'i. When he knows that he has enough to give he will either place one palm onto the affected area, use point massage, acupuncture or tui na (Chinese massage). All of these healing arts make use of 'putting the ch'i in'. The first method uses a point called pericardium 8, near the centre of the palm.

This is the healing point and is where the ch'i is able to escape and enter another either for the purpose of healing or in the martial arts. Point massage uses acupuncture points, pressing the relevant ones with the fingers and 'putting the ch'i in'. Acupuncture also uses this putting in of ch'i via very fine needles. The acupuncture point is activated by the needle and then the doctor puts the ch'i in via the conductor. This is a more effective way of getting the ch'i in as the electrical resistance of the skin is overcome. Tui na is a massaging technique that makes use of points and squeezing, manipulating techniques.

If someone has to be treated for a major ailment the doctor will fast or only eat fruit for 10 days and practice Qigong three times each day for at least 20 minutes each time. Only in this way will the doctor's body and mind be strong and clean enough to perform the difficult healing session. A great amount of energy is also needed for this session, hence the long Qigong.

Sometimes western students of Chinese healing methods only look at the physical effect of the particular practice i.e. they only study the technique of needling or the technique of massage. But if no ch'i is present then all of that learning is wasted. Some form of internal art must also be practised in order to gain the idea of ch'i. Qigong is the starting point for this learning.

History and origin of Qigong

The qi part (or ch'i) of Qigong means air or inner vital energy. Translated into western medical terms it means resistance to disease, adaptability to the external environment and the ability to overcome internal troubles and regain health. In Chinese medicine for thousands of years great importance has been placed upon exercises that strengthen the vital energy.

Traditionally any exercise that dealt with breathing and internal methods was considered to be Qigong. Nowadays we tend to call the more static breathing techniques Qigong and the moving exercises by their specific names.

The content of Qigong is varied but it mainly involves the regulation of the structure (posture), regulation of the mind, regulation of the respiration, self-massage and movement of the body.

The earliest records of Qigong come from the jin wen (writings on bronzes) from the Zhou dynasty (ca. 1100 –221 BC). During the Warring States period (770 – 221 BC) Qigong developed as never before and many great thinkers emerged. In the *Book of Changes* or *I jing*, semen, internal energy and the mind were considered to be the treasures of the body. An exercise akin to Qigong called daoyin was popular at this time. An inscription on a relic found in the Warring States period read, 'Take a deep breath and sink it to tantien (a point about 3' below the navel). Hold it there for a while and then exhale it as sprouting grass until it reaches the top of your head. This causes the Yang energy to rise and the Yin energy to drop. Those whose Yang and Yin energy goes its own way will live, otherwise you will die'. This saying was part of the daoyin exercise and holds true for all Qigong nowadays including T'ai chi, pa-kua, Taoist yoga and all of the internal arts.

Found at the No. 3 Tomb excavations at Mawangdui in Changsha, the capital of Hunan Province, were many medical treatises and books on daoyin dating to the Western Han dynasty (206 BC – AD 24). Among these relics were pieces of silk onto which had been painted figures of men and women, young and old performing daoyin exercises. 44 pieces of silk were found. Some figures imitated the movements of the bear, ape, tiger, deer and bird which are now called 'Wuquinxì' or the five animal forms. All of these physical movements were combined with breathing techniques. Next to one of the figures were the words, 'Look skyward and exhale'.

The earliest and most famous book on medicine comes from the Warring States period and is called *Huang Di Neijing (The Yellow Emperor's Manual of internal Medicine)*. From this book we read, 'One must breathe the essence of life, regulate one's respiration to preserve one's spirit and keep the muscles relaxed This sums up the art of T'ai chi ch'uan in a nutshell. In another part of the book we are told how to perform this exercise. 'Stand facing the South in the early morning and inhale seven times without thinking about anything'. This also depicts our Qigong perfectly.

In the Southern and Northern Dynasties (AD 420 – 589) an Indian monk came to China to set up the Zen practices in the now famous Shaolin Monastery. He was said to be called Ta-Mo or Bodhidharma. He evolved a set of exercises combining his Qigong and Chinese wushu. This later became the basis for all of our martial arts.

Qigong was widely spread from the Han Dynasty (206 BC – AD 220) to the Tang Dynasty (AD 618 – 907). It was used widely in medical treatments; one famous doctor called Caho Yuanfang of the Sui Dynasty (AD 581 – 618) said that when someone had mastered Qigong, they were able to release through their palms a sort of vital energy, which could heal others.

By the Song Dynasty (AD 960 – 1279), some Confucian students who had failed their Imperial examinations turned to the medical profession. However they placed too much emphasis on the Classical theoretical studies and neglected their practical studies. (This still happens today; many acupuncturists have excellent theory but no ch'i). As a result of this neglect, Qigong declined and was only practised among the

folk doctors. Fortunately research was carried on in the religious circles and Qigong was integrated with wushu. However, the same thing happens today; Qigong is too hard for many wushu (martial arts) practitioners to understand, so they neglect their Qigong, or are never even aware of it.

From the Wong to the Qing dynasties (AD 960 – 1911), Qigong was used in connection with mysticism and many people shrugged it off as superstition. But since the turn of this century there has been a resurgence of interest and Qigong has been researched in the light of modern science. Many of the exercises which did result from superstition have been tested and discarded, but others have been retained e.g. the Eight Golden Treasures, also known by many other names.

In China today Qigong clinics have been set up to study and teach Qigong and to treat disease. Modern instruments have been used to detect infrared electromagnetic waves, and magnetic information coming from the palms of Qigong masters who are using this internal energy to treat such diseases as high blood pressure, neurosis, functional disease, paralysis, cerebral concussion and tumours of the thyroid gland. It is sometimes used as an anaesthetic, although I'd want to be very sure it worked before it was used on me!

Healing yourself with Qigong

Qigong can be performed anywhere at any time and only takes around 15 minutes per session. At first you will need a quiet place where you are able to concentrate, but after some time you will be able to perform it in any environment, even on a bus or train if you don't mind people staring at you.

The postures

Three basic Qigong postures can be held – standing, sitting or lying down. The standing posture was described in Levels of meditation, see photograph 1. The sitting posture is much the same – sit on a chair with feet flat on the floor and the back straight. One of those old wooden kitchen chairs is ideal. Hold the palms in front as for the standing posture and vary the intensity by either moving the palms out for more effect or pulling them in if the exercise becomes too tiring. Clear the mind and concentrate on getting the breath down.

The lying position requires the same mind attitude as the others, but is good for the elderly and those in poor health. Lie on your bed or on the floor Hold your palms over your chest with fingers pointing towards each other as shown in photograph 4. You may vary the intensity by lifting your arms higher, or holding the palms further apart. A subconscious flow of ch'i should be felt in the palms i.e. as if the palms want to move themselves in and out with the breath.

Four different palm positions

The palms can be held in four positions. The main position is called 'The Mother Position' and is the one seen in the photographs, with palms towards you. This position is a general health giver for the whole body and mind.

The second is its opposite, 'The Father Position' where the palms face outwards – everything else is the same. This causes the ch'i to flow into different muscles. This position is used when 'Yin sickness' occurs i.e. where a person has not much energy, is too thin, out of condition from too much softness.

The third position is 'The Daughter Position' where the palms face downwards as in photograph 5. This position is used to cure any arm, wrist or palm injuries, including arthritic complaints.

The fourth position is 'The Son Position' and is seen in photograph 6. The palms are facing each other and bent slightly at the wrists, but not enough to cause tension. This position treats ailments of the upper back and arms.

Moving Qigong

Any movement that uses relaxed postures integrated with breathing techniques could technically be called Qigong. However there are certain exercises that also work on specific organs or in the treatment of certain diseases when combined with the breathing techniques.

The changing of the *sinews*, or triple warmer Qigong

This triple warmer exercise is said to balance the yin and yang energy of the body. Stand in a normal position with feet relaxed, toes turned slightly outward. Breathe in through the nose and lift both palms up in front of you with the palms facing upwards. The fingers point towards each other as you stand up onto your toes. Older people may prefer not to stand on their toes.

As you breathe out, turn the palms downwards still with the fingers of each palm pointing towards each other and push downwards back to the starting point as you lower your heels. This must be done with very relaxed palms and shoulders. Make sure the shoulders do not lift up at any time. See photograph 8.

This first movement is called the Lower Warmer and acts upon the elimination organs, colon, kidneys, etc.

Repeat this exercise three times and then go on to the next part, called the Middle Warmer. This exercise acts upon the digestive organs.

This time lift the palms in the same way as before, coming up onto the toes again. This is exactly the same as before.

Now as you breathe out, turn both palms outwards at chest height and push out away from your body. When you push out from your chest, the arms should be held at arms length but not quite straightened. Continue the push until the palms have reached the sides of your body. Continue the circular movement and push downward at both sides until the palms have come back to your hip level. Remember to stay relaxed.

For the Upper Warmer, start the movement in the same way as for the other two by bringing the palms upwards and standing up on your toes. This time gently roll the palms up and over your head with the palms turned up. Hold your breath as you push upward. Next, take both palms out to either side and as you push down, breathe out and stand down. This acts on the respiratory system and the mind.

Never eat before or after practising any Qigong for at least 10 minutes and preferably one hour as digestion uses up too much energy. The main areas of energy use are procreation (sex), digestion and physical or mind movement. So when practising any meditation we need the ch'i to flow freely. If we use up the gained energy there is no sense in doing the exercise in the first place.

Exercise for the alleviation of the triple warmer

This exercise harmonises the three vital forces, respiration, digestion and reproduction. Link your fingers down near the tan-tien (3' below the navel). As you stand up in the same way as for the first triple warmer exercise, bring the palms up to chest height, this time a little closer to the chest. Photograph 14. Now push both palms up over your head as you look at the backs of the palms, which have been turned outwards. Hold this position for about 5 seconds and breathe out as the palms part and push down to either side.

Harmonising yin and yang of stomach and spleen This exercise works upon the stomach and spleen, which are linked in Chinese medicine. Lift the palms as before with the fingers almost touching and the palms in close to the chest as you breathe in. Now push one palm up over your head, palm up, and one down to your side, palm down. Hold this position for about 5 seconds while holding the breath and then breathe out as the upper palm comes down to the same level as the other. Repeat this on both sides.

Prevention of tuberculosis

Turn your head as far as possible while breathing in. Don't strain. Hold this position for a count of 5 then turn back to the front while breathing out and repeat on the other side. Photograph 17 If any unusual amount of pain is felt in either shoulder as this is done, there could be something wrong with your small intestine.

To strengthen the kidneys

Bend down with knees straight, grab your big toes and lift them upwards as you breathe in. Hold this position for 5 seconds and breathe out as you stand up. Older people may bend the knees. This exercise acts upon the kidney meridian. See

photograph 18. An alternative is to simply press the main kidney point called K1 on the sole of the foot just between the mounts of the big toe and second toe. Hold pressure for 7 seconds and stop, then repeat

Qigong for sexual organs

This is a very powerful exercise and should be treated with a little caution. If you start feeling sick, stop and try again later. This is also helpful for menstrual disorders and helps with premature ejaculation.

Sit on a low chair or on the edge of a bed so that your feet are flat on the floor and your back straight. Cover your knees with your palms. Inhale through the nose while bending forward 45 degrees, keeping the back straight. Use the mind to feel a concentration of energy coming up through the soles, along both legs to CV1, between the anus and the sexual organs. Now breathe in just a little more as you bend a further 10 degrees and direct the energy to the uterus or penis. Slowly breathe out as you sit up. As with many yogic exercises, a little 'sexual feeling' may occur during practice, but this is quite natural.

For this exercise, lie on the ground with your arms by your sides and slowly relax every muscle. Inhale and imagine that the breath is coming in through your feet as you slowly lift your legs keeping the feet together. It is important not to use any more muscle than is necessary for the job – just think about which muscles you need and keep the rest relaxed. Bring the feet up 45 degrees and hold until you start to shake a little, usually about 10 seconds. Now as you breathe out, imagine that the air is moving from the stomach back down and out of your feet, as you slowly lower your feet to the ground.

Colour therapy and Qigong

Sometimes it is necessary to use a more potent form of Qigong when treating certain diseases. Colours seem to be able to direct the ch'i to certain organs. Practice the Qigong exercises described earlier and place a large board of the relevant colour on the wall in front of you, and let this colour enter your mind as you practice. Sometimes in China they use colour rooms, and the patient is left to practise Qigong in a room of a colour pertinent to the organ being treated.

The position of your hands

If you have trouble with your lungs, place the two palms, still in the Qigong position, near the lungs. For the heart place the palms in front of your upper chest and a little closer than usual. For the kidneys, hold the backs of the palms about one inch over the kidney area at your lower back, etc.

The colours

White: Lungs and colon; to treat grief or sorrow

Green: Liver and gall bladder; to treat anger

Yellow: Stomach and spleen; to treat thoughtfulness and worry

Black: Kidneys and bladder; to treat fear

Red: Heart and intestine; to treat over joy

Tapping the thymus

A gorilla doesn't rap on his chest for nothing. In Chinese medicine the thymus gland, situated at the bottom of the neck and running towards the sternum in a tuber shape, is most important in the control of the flow of ch'i.

Certain sounds are said to have an effect upon certain organs, and if we use these sounds in conjunction with the tapping then we are able to heal the controller of ch'i.

Close your fists and rap on your chest lightly twice as you breathe in. Now as you throw both fists back as far as they will go in an explosive manner, say the sound 'HA. Be sure to have a light practice before to warm up the muscles, because the chest and back are stretched.

The sound 'HA strengthens the heart but the sound must come from the lower belly and really try to knock out the back wall with the sound. Try not to be around other people as they will think you quite mad.

Practise the same arm movements with all the other sounds, and make the sounds come from the lower belly:

The sound 'TSSSS' strengthens the lungs.

The sound 'SHU' strengthens the liver.

The sound 'FU strengthens the kidneys.

The sound 'HU' strengthens the spleen.

The sound 'SHI' strengthens the solar plexus.

Take this exercise easy at first and stretch the muscles before you start. If you are treating a particular organ that is damaged, repeat the sound 36 times. For general good health repeat only 5 times.

T'ai chi

T'ai chi is a moving Qigong. Each posture is said to send the ch'i to various parts of the body in order of importance. Each movement is said to activate the twelve main acupuncture meridians and thus give the whole body a healthy workout. T'ai chi is

mainly preventive but will cure many diseases or body disorders over a long period of time. Usually I will either send a sick person to our acupuncturist or treat the ailment with a more specific Qigong exercise to have a more immediate effect. Then I give T'ai chi to stop the disease coming back.

In photograph 20 the posture Single Whip is said to have an effect on the joints, arthritis, etc. while the posture White Crane Cools Wings in photograph 21 is said to affect the central nervous system.

The way in which these postures work to heal the body is to cause the ch'i to travel along certain acupuncture meridians to perform certain work. This work is to do with the martial art of T'ai chi.

If we imagine that we are performing certain martial techniques, for instance pushing someone over, and if we have understood the criteria for the practice of T'ai chi, the ch'i or energy will flow along the meridians in order to reach its goal of pushing. Before the ch'i has reached its goal it must pass through certain organs and is able to heal those organs as it passes. What we do is fool the mind into doing a task when there really isn't a task to be done. If we really had to push someone over then we would create tension in order to do it, and the ch'i would be blocked. After many years of practice we learn to work and still have the ch'i flow to all parts. This is because T'ai chi has a rather unique training method to teach us to perform tasks while still remaining relaxed. This exercise is called *toi-sau* or pushing hands. It involves two people using certain pushing and defending techniques to try and push without using brute force (tension) and to defend themselves without using tension. In this way the ch'i is turned into *jing*, a sort of purified ch'i which can be used for work.

For more information on T'ai chi and pushing hands see the list of books at the end.

Medical T'ai chi and Qigong

The T'ai chi doctor diagnoses in two ways – physical and mental, or external and internal.

Mentally unbalanced attitudes usually manifest themselves in some physical ailment and if the practitioner is able to recognise these imbalances s/he is able to treat the physical disease, thereby treating the mental disease. On a very basic level, and keeping in mind that there are many variants in diagnosis of this kind, we have an imbalance of yin and yang. If a person is overly quiet and reticent, then there is usually a yang deficiency, whereas if the person is too outgoing and extrovert then there is a yin deficiency. Other mental disorders are caused by the same imbalance on a more sensitive level and must be treated with caution. Also, it must be remembered that certain people will seem to have a yin deficiency but in fact may be covering up for a yang deficiency, and vice versa. This can become evident in the way a person performs the T'ai chi movements. If for example a person is extremely extrovert and loud, but the movements are very small and close to the body, then they are probably using the extroversion to cover up introversion. Usually just learning the T'ai chi form will cure this condition, and after some time you will note that the movements become more open and well balanced and the mental condition improves.

Teaching a patient the T'ai chi form treats overall ailments and is used to balance the whole body internally and externally over a period of time. But sometimes a more direct approach is needed to cure a certain disease, so that the movements will become easier to learn. For this we must look at the physical way of diagnosis using T'ai chi and Qigong.

Physical diagnosis using T'ai chi and Qigong

Qigong is said to be able to bring a person's physical and mental situation into a state of balance, so we are able to use this to diagnose.

Observe the person in a Qigong position. If the palms are in the same place as they started after about five minutes, and every other part of the body is in the correct position, then just performing T'ai chi and Qigong will be enough to bring that person back to good health provided the diet is healthy. However if the palms move independently, or the shoulders or arms, etc., then there is something wrong.

For instance, if the left palm drops to a lower position and the patient is unaware of this, there may be a yang deficiency somewhere in the left-hand side of the body. If the left palm rises then there may be a yin deficiency. The deficiency could be in any of the organs on that side of the body. Sometimes if the ailment is not too far advanced, simply righting the palms, shoulders, elbows, etc. will cure the disease over a period of time, but if not then we must use the T'ai chi form to diagnose which organ the deficiency or abundance is in.

Remember that every posture from the T'ai chi form relates to a certain organ in the body, so we are able to use this for diagnosis. Using the above case, if a person's left palm keeps dropping during Qigong we know this indicates a yang deficiency somewhere on the left-hand side. We then look at all the postures which deal with the organs of the left hand side such as 'Grasping Bird's Tail' or 'Fair Lady Works at Shuttles' etc. If the patient finds great difficulty in performing any one of these postures, and bearing in mind that most people find T'ai chi difficult at first, then the problem may lie in the organ that is related to that posture. If the extremely difficult posture is 'Grasping Bird's Tail' then this indicates a colon problem; if the posture is 'Fair Lady at Shuttles; a heart problem. My book *Power T'ai Chi Ch'uan, No.1* covers most of the postures and their related organs.

Once the condition has been diagnosed we can then use the appropriate posture from the T'ai chi form as a Qigong stance to cure that organ.

It must be remembered that a patient in an advanced stage of illness cannot usually be cured with these methods, because it takes some time for the treatment to work. Firstly the patient must be well enough to perform Qigong and then the T'ai chi form, so in these cases the patient should be sent to a very good acupuncturist or to a western doctor who may have to use the only means left — the knife. It is our job as therapeutic movement practitioners to stop the patient from getting ill in the first place.

The natural therapist looks at the person as a whole —diet, lifestyle, sexual habits, and in fact everything that the patient does from day to day. We must look at why the condition has come about and then work out ways to break the cycle so that the disease does not recur. It is not enough to put a Band-Aid on a bleeding finger — we must stop the patient continuing to cut the finger.

Pa-kua

Pa-kua chang is an ancient Chinese martial/healing art, and is much less widely known than its brother, T'ai chi ch'uan. Pa-kua, like T'ai chi can produce some amazing healing results.

The exact origins of pa-kua are not known, but we do know that its basis is found in the Chinese *Book of Changes* or the *I Ching*. The *I Ching* is one of the oldest books from ancient Chinese culture and is used as a kind of bible — it is said to be able to predict the future and many people use it only as a book of prophesy.

The basic philosophy is one of softness overcoming hardness, and the use of the yielding principle instead of force on force, rather like the philosophy of a man called Jesus. Pa-kua is also based upon the Tao and once again we see the non-aggressive or yielding factor Taoism is a philosophy, which predates the more scientific Confucianism.

The *I-jing* is said to cover every possible change that occurs in nature and in pa-kua we also cover these changes within the various palm changes, thus bringing ourselves a little closer to the Universe.

Certain animal movements are copied during the practice of pa-kua and have immediate healing benefits on the body because of the way in which we twist and turn, activating every acupuncture meridian and exercising every muscle and tendon in the body

As with T'ai chi after some time of practice, we generate the internal energy called ch'i and so every organ is bathed in life giving force.

Some of the pa-kua postures are shown in photographs 23 to 26. These postures can be used in a static position using natural breath, or within the context of the pa-kua form

Taoist yoga

During the so-called 'primitive period' in China (10,000-3000 BC), the Chinese looked into the supernatural and mystical forces of the body. It is commonly thought that during this period the acupuncture meridians were slowly discovered, as were the many different herbs still in use today.

The acupuncture meridians were first used to open up the energy centres of the body for self-realisation, in much the same way that Indian yogis do today, but now acupuncture is used mainly for healing. Taoism flourished from about 300 BC until

the birth of Christ. From Taoism we have received the great internal arts such as T'ai chi ch'uan, pa-kua chang, Taoist yoga and Qigong. These were all based upon 'doing by not doing'. This concept can be explained by comparing Indian and Chinese yoga. If both arts were practised side by side we would see that the India yogi (in most cases) would be performing more movement than the Chinese yogi. In actual fact the Chinese yogi would be doing more work than the Indian would by 'not doing'. The Chinese yogi would hold very difficult stances for long periods of time with little or no movement. These isometric postures were said to be able to send the energy around the body and open up all of the channels of ch'i or life-force when performed in conjunction with certain breathing techniques.

During the primitive period, the Chinese developed eight basic postures, most of which were in a squatting or sitting position. Around 200 BC, Bodhidharma or Ta-Mo, an Indian Monk, visited the Chinese temple at Shaolin, (Little Forest), and increased the postures to 18. He was also responsible for teaching the Chinese martial artists certain internal methods to increase the power of their art. Later the Chinese arts became more internal and the great arts such as T'ai chi were born.

As with Indian yoga, Taoist yoga deals first with the body and then with the mind and spirit, believing that we must have a healthy body in which to house the spirit. It is the physical postures that look somewhat like Indian yoga. The Chinese way is to develop flexibility adaptability and suppleness of the body as a whole. Taoist or Chinese yoga uses a form of internal massage called 'movement within stillness'.

The postures of Taoist yoga are held for long periods in order to toughen the body and mind as a whole. Discipline and emotional control are used to overcome the physical pain brought about from this method. Nowadays the basic principle is retained but [he postures are not held until breaking point and a softer attitude is adopted.

Each of these postures has a certain effect on the meridians and so affects each organ individually.

Photograph 27 shows the 'Sitting Duck Posture' which affects the stomach meridian by gently stretching it and then twisting it to cause further activation. This posture is used to help digestion disorders and flatulence. It also gently stretches the upper leg ball joint ligaments and muscles. The posture is held until a mild shaking occurs. Do practise gently at first, and if you are elderly be very careful not to hold the posture for too long as leg pain can occur if the ligaments are very out of condition. The breathing is deep but not forced, and the head is straight and relaxed. Photograph 28 shows the 'Leopard Posture' and affects the spleen. It is useful for treating cold hands and feet, and also tones the entire lymphatic system. Keep relaxed into the posture.

Photograph 29 shows the 'Dragon Posture'. This affects the stomach and kidneys and generally tones up the muscles of the whole body. Photograph 30 shows the 'Dragon Extension'. Breathe in just before going on to the extension and breathe out when finished. This is also good for eliminating fear.

Photograph 31 shows the 'Chicken Posture'. This posture acts upon the gall bladder and large intestine and should be held until a mild shaking occurs. This is especially useful after eating too much animal fat and shoulder pain occurs. You might also take

a glass of water to which some pure lemon juice has been added, to help break down the animal fat. This posture is also good for bowel problems.

Photograph 32 shows the 'Turtle Posture'. This posture affects the heart meridian and is very good at keeping anger at bay. It is also good for insomnia caused by 'fire in the heart'. People with heart troubles should take it easy with this posture. Photograph 33 shows the 'Bat Posture'. This is good for the central nervous system and works by gently twisting the spine. It is also good for developing leg muscle tone. The posture should be held for about 30 seconds to one minute.

The 'Wild Horse Posture' is seen in photograph 34. This posture is said to act upon the lungs because of the type of breathing used with it. While standing in this posture expand the lungs by inhaling then exhale with great force as you say 'Tssss'.

All these postures will have an almost immediate effect, so as with all exercise, take it gently and experiment with what you can or cannot do.

Taoist yoga covers a wide range of exercises and virtually anything that is done with a relaxed mind and stretches the body can be called Taoist yoga. Many of the T'ai chi postures can be called Taoist yoga, as can many of the pa-kua postures.

Chinese self massage

There are two ways of using Chinese methods of healing. The first and least common way makes use of the ch'i by putting it into the patient, using acupuncture needles to reduce the skin's resistance, point massage, etc. The second, more common way is to simply manipulate the various acupuncture points to cause them to activate. To heal ourselves we can either build up our ch'i using Qigong, and cause the ch'i to flow with T'ai chi or we can manipulate our own points. In self-massage we manipulate our points and stimulate the ch'i we already have.

The method

There is a set routine starting from the head and moving down. Sit on the floor in a lotus or cross-legged position. The palms are held as shown in photograph 35; the eyes are slightly closed with the tongue pressed lightly to the hard palate. The shoulders are relaxed and the back straight and vertical to the ground. After a short time of meditation rub the palms together for about 10 seconds to create some heat. Then place the index and middle fingers of each hand onto the forehead as shown in photograph 36. Rub the fingers back and forth lightly all over the forehead for about 10 seconds, then take the palms back down to the knees in a circular movement and meditate again for about 10 seconds, breathing deeply but gently.

Next, rub the palms together again and place the same fingers over each eye and rub gently for 10 seconds, covering the whole closed eye and the eye socket. Take the palms back to the knees.

Rub the palms together again and take the same fingers up to the ears and rub the whole ear for about 10 seconds, including behind the ear and just down onto the jaw. Take the palms back down again and meditate.

Rub the palms together again, and this time take the fingers around to the back of the neck rubbing gently the whole of the neck back and front and up into the medulla (back of the brain). Take the palms back to the knees.

Rub the palms and repeat the whole process on the mouth and chin including the cheekbones.

To massage the head we start by rubbing the palms together and then leaning forward as we press the fingers of each hand into the floor for about 3 seconds. See photograph 37. Now take the tips of the fingers of each palm and tap the whole skull so that you feel the pressure is almost painful but not quite. See photograph 38. Take the palms back to the knees.

For the teeth, we 'clack' the jaw 36 times. With hands on your knees, open your mouth and clack your teeth together lightly. Even if you have false teeth you will still be activating the acupuncture points of the jaw. This is important for the normal functioning of the bowel.

Next we rub the palms together, and this time using a closed fist rub the whole of one arm with one fist. The pressure should be firm. Repeat this on the other arm. Photograph 39.

Bring the palms back to the knees and rub them together again. This time the closed fist rubs the whole chest area using both fists together.

Take the palms back and rub them again. Now take the fists around to your lower back and rub the whole of the kidney area as shown in photograph 40.

Take the palms back to the knees and repeat the rubbing together. Now place your left palm onto your left knee. Using the right thumb and forefinger, rub with a heavy action the point called 'Dragon Mouth Point' or Colon 4, just between the thumb and forefinger. See photograph 41.

Repeat this procedure on each of your fingers, rubbing the whole way down to the tip with a little force. Then complete by rubbing the back of the left hand with the right palm. Repeat this procedure using the opposite hand.

The same procedure is carried out on the legs. Using the closed fist lightly punch the underside of the thigh and rub the top of the thigh. The same applies to the lower leg. Rub the toes and when completed take a hold of each foot and shake it gently as shown in photograph 42.

Also press using a little force all over the sole of each foot using the tips of the fingers.

To complete the self-massage, place each fist onto your chest and breathe in. As you gently throw both fists out, bend at the waist as far as you are able and breathe out. Hold this posture for about 10 seconds before sitting up and breathing in again. See photograph 43.

Stand up and in a very relaxed way swing each arm in turn until the fist strikes the shoulder. You should feel a slight shock wave. Repeat this 3 times on each shoulder. See photograph 44

Breathing techniques

The five major schools of breathing are medical, Confucian, Buddhist, Taoist and wushu or martial arts. Medical breathing techniques aim at strengthening one's overall health and are mainly preventive. The Confucian school of breathing deals with self-cultivation and temperament. Taoist breathing deals with one's moral character and longevity. The Buddhist breathing exercises are broken into two lines of thought and involve mainly the mind. The first Buddhist school is called 'Samadhi' and claims that everything in the world is illusionary. The other school is that of meditation which deals with the cultivation of the mind and the preservation of all forms of life on earth. The wushu method of breathing is for physical training and good health. All of these schools have one thing in common, that of training of the mind and development of the qi, or ch'i.

The breath is the most important part of the Chinese self-healing arts. There are certain ways to breathe while performing the various exercises described in this book.

The first and most important way to breathe is the natural way i.e. we try to get our breathing back to a more natural way, the way of the child. As we grow older and are affected by stress, the cause of 70% of all modern diseases, our breathing rises to the upper chest and we end up only using the top portion of our lungs. The lungs start just under the collarbone and end at the bottom of the rib cage. But the major part of the lungs is the part covered by the ribs on either side of the abdomen. This part, through tension and stress is sometimes not used, and so we are only receiving a small amount of oxygen. We try to compensate for this by breathing faster. One of the big faults in western posture is the 'pull the belly in and stick out the chest' syndrome supposed to look good on men and women. But in order to pull in the stomach and stick out the chest we have to tense certain muscles and this restricts our lung capacity.

The first thing to do is relax the upper chest and shoulders so that the breath is able to go deeper into the lungs and eventually fill up the whole lung again.

If you find it difficult to relax the chest while standing in a Qigong position, lie down and place your palms across your stomach. As you breathe in, feel the lower abdomen pushing outward and try to totally relax the chest. It may not look too cosmetic but it may just save your life. Feel your palms rise with each breath and lower with each exhalation. Try to not force the action, just breathe and it should happen naturally IF YOU ARE RELAXED. If you have access to a small child, see how it breathes and copy that. If you have been doing heavy exercise then the chest may rise a little more with the breath, but generally the chest should not stick right out.

Breathe with your nose; that's what it's for. There are certain times when we breathe through the mouth and I'll cover these later. Try breathing naturally while doing the triple warmer exercise covered earlier – this tends to open the lungs more. And remember there is a natural wait from inhaling to exhaling unless violent exercise has been undertaken.

Natural breath

For spiritual stimulation and physical comfort, try using the natural breathing technique just described. Now we try to use the imagination to cause certain energy circulations to take place.

As you breathe out, imagine some physical object, say a ball-bearing or a marble, rolling from the crown, down the centre of your forehead, right down the front of your body to a position about 3" below the navel. This is the tan-tien or psychic centre. Only use this on the out breath.

Reverse breath

This breath is said to aid digestion and enable us to circulate the ch'i around the 'upper heavenly circuit'.

The physical movements of this breath are different to the natural breath just practised. As you breathe in, pull the lower abdomen in and as you breathe out, push the lower abdomen out. This is reverse breathing. The visualisation for this breath is to imagine the marble being sucked up along your backbone from just under the anus (CV 1). The marble continues along the backbone and up to the crown, then down to just where the tongue is touching the highest part of your hard palate. Now as you breathe out, the marble travels down the tongue and then down the front of the body to the tan-tien. On the next in breath you suck the marble downward from tan-tien to CV 1 and then back up the backbone as before. This is called the upper heavenly circulation – the backbone route is the yang meridian and the front is the yin meridian.

Harmonising breath

This breath is said to harmonise the balance of yin and yang in the body and uses the reverse breath to circulate ch'i around the 'macro cosmic circulation'.

The inhalation is the same as for reverse breath, but this time as you breathe out take the marble right down both thighs and over the large toe to Kidney point 1, mentioned earlier. As you breathe in the ch'i comes up along the back of both legs, joins at the coccyx, then up the backbone, and continues as for reverse breath.

Pre-natal or foetal breath

When a baby is in the womb it uses reverse breathing, using the part of the abdomen under the diaphragm. This is called pre-natal; everything above the diaphragm is

called post-natal. In order to mix the inner and outer breath, we must breathe like an unborn foetus as well as a young child. To do this we must perform both reverse and natural breathing.

As you breathe in, suck in the lower abdomen under the diaphragm. At the same time the part of the abdomen on the top of the diaphragm is pushed out. Now as you breathe out, the lower abdomen is pushed out while the upper is contracted. This causes a sort of wave effect and when the lungs are at full inhalation, the pre-natal and post-natal ch'i is allowed to mix at the border of the diaphragm. This is because the ch'i in the pre-natal part and in the post-natal part flow in opposite directions. If we breathe normally, using only natural breathing or only reverse breathing, then the two kinds of ch'i would not meet. As you breathe out, a little of the outer ch'i is added to the inner ch'i, and that is how we build up our store of ch'i by breathing.

Tortoise breath

Tortoise breath is exactly the same as pre-natal breath, but you must hold the breath in before exhaling for a count of 10. This allows more ch'i to mix.

It must be noted that it should take around 4 years to reach the level of tortoise breath, allowing some months on each of the preceding breaths.

Cleansing breath

This is one of the times when we use the mouth to breathe. Breathe in through the nose and out through the mouth. This is said to cleanse the body of impurities and relax inner tension and lower fever. Sighing is a spontaneous manifestation of this sort of breathing.

Tonic breath

This is the reverse of the previous breathing technique. This time breathe in through the mouth and out through the nose. This is said to act as a tonic and build up the body. This breath is said to give more energy and improve blood circulation.

Nutrition

Man cannot live on T'ai chi alone. T'ai chi and therapeutic movement helps, of course, and many masters of such arts have lived long lives while being able to abuse their bodies with junk food, alcohol and cigarettes. However, these people would probably have lived much longer had they also practised good eating and living habits.

What we eat is directly related to how we think and act; our standard of life and thought is directly connected to our food. As a general rule, people who enjoy blood sports and violent activities usually have a high intake of animal protein, whereas those involved in a higher level of thought require less food and certainly less animal products. This is a generalisation and there are of course exceptions to the rule. For

instance, women tend to be able to take in more bad food without it affecting their higher realms of thought because they are usually on a slightly higher spiritual plain than men. If we choose to eat junk food and rotting flesh then our standard of living and thinking will drop.

We often have no control over the air we breathe in the streets, but we are able to control it to a certain extent in the home, with a wonderful 20th century invention, the negative ion generator. The alternative is to move to the mountains.

Our water supply is now so polluted by our endeavours to clean it up, add things to make our teeth strong, etc. that it is almost undrinkable. Only in Australia and some States of America are we forced to drink fluoride, despite reports of people dying from fluoride overdoses and children's teeth being affected by fluoridosis. British scientists have also found that fluoride bonds with other ions in the body to form a new ion, which can cause certain cancers. All other countries have seen the light but we keep tipping tonnes of this highly toxic chemical into our water supplies. (Fluoride used to be one of the ingredients of Ratsac, a highly toxic rat poison). The only way around this problem is to buy a very expensive water purifier, but make sure it extracts fluoride as well as chlorine.

We have much more control over the quality of the food we eat. Whatever else you may think about the Bible, it holds many hidden health ideas, which are as relevant today as they were whenever it was written. 'The people shall eat the herbs of the fields and the fruit of the trees. The animals shall eat the grasses and the grains'.
Genesis, 1:29-30

We have only to place ourselves in the position of the first people on earth. Man was not given great mandibles with which to grind down hard grains, nor was he given sharp incisors with which to tear apart animal flesh. We would not have been attracted to a stalk of rice or wheat, or to a cow. We would have been attracted to colour and smell in the first instance, then taste. I regard fruit, herbs (green, leafy vegetables) and honey to be manna from heaven and perfect human food.

Many of my students ask me 'How will I remain strong if I only eat fruit'? I tell them to go to the zoo and look at the gorilla. This strongest of all primates only eats fruit and has a wonderfully gentle nature; he can also shimmy up a tree one handed pulling his huge weight under him. Everyone needs different foods and must find her/his own ideal within the basic guidelines. I am not dogmatic about diet, I don't say 'Eat as I eat nor would I recommend a particular diet without having tried it myself. For instance I will sometimes eat only one fruit for four days to see what effect this has, or I will eat ice-cream and artificially sweetened food. One company in Australia guarantees an all natural ice-cream, but the ingredients include sugar. Sugar does come from a natural source, but has a very negative effect on our bodies. After eating two of their products it was possible for two of my students to push me over easily; under normal circumstances they would not have had a hope of defeating me.

Raw food

Many people say to me that their stomachs are unable to take raw food. Well, what a sorry lot we are if we can't eat the food that was put on earth for us. If food is cooked it is pre-digested before it enters our stomach and so the digestive tract becomes weakened through non-use. Obviously if we have pampered our digestive tracts with overcooked food, a raw diet will feel a little uncomfortable and even cause some sickness until our systems get used to digesting raw food again. This is one good reason not to change your diet radically all at once. You should change your eating habits slowly, starting by adding a little more raw or lightly cooked food each week until you are able to take real food again.

Grains

If you must eat grains, wheat is the best one. Mahatma Gandhi tried to convert the Indian people to eating wheat instead of rice, which has high food value but is mucus forming. Rice would make a great woodworking glue. Wheat is also acid forming but far less so than rice. Wheat should not be cooked, but allowed to stand overnight in tepid water. In the morning the grains will have swollen and split open and with a little honey will make a wonderful breakfast.

Mucus

The body should always be slightly alkaline and if we allow it to become acid then sickness occurs. Food can be either acid forming or acid binding; acid forming means that on digestion the food becomes acid or mucus, acid binding means that on digestion the food binds itself to the mucus so it can be eliminated.

There are two kinds of mucus — the one our mucus membrane produces is a free flowing slime which contains mucin and various body salts; the other comes from outside and is a poison.

Foods that are acid before digestion do not remain acid —all fruit, even citrus fruit, becomes alkaline on digestion. This is why when we eat only fruit, the acid that has been stored in our bodies is now eliminated through our kidneys and so we feel sick — so don't be too radical in the beginning or you might damage your kidneys. Other foods such as cheese and meat become acid on digestion, and therefore mucus forming. All grains are mucus forming, as are beans; sprouted seeds are not.

If you have spent your life eating junk food and suddenly go on a long fast, be very careful what you eat after the fast. If acid binding foods are eaten e.g. figs, grapes or olives, this could cause too much poison to be eliminated, so start with the in between foods such as apples or bananas.

Bread, the staff of life

Perhaps nowadays bread should more appropriately be called the staff of death. Even the so-called good stuff that the larger bakeries are beginning to produce, in response to demand, still contains many additives. The best bread, and the safest, is the bread you bake yourself. Here is a simple recipe:

Take a teaspoonful of freshly ground flour (you can do that in your blender) and place it in a bowl with a teaspoonful of honey and a cupful of water Mix it up and leave the bowl in a dark cupboard for about three days until a bubbling scum forms on the top. Take a mixing bowl of fresh flour and add the mixture to it to make the dough – leave to rise (about two hours). Before placing the dough in the oven, take a small piece and keep in the refrigerator until the next time you want to make bread. Just add this catalyst to the flour This makes a kind of sourdough – the longer you leave the mixture to bubble the sourer it becomes.

Protein

We have been conditioned to believe that we need copious amounts of protein to survive we don't. And what we need we can get from plants. Do some reading and decide what is right for you. If you are giving up meat and feel weak through not having the amount of protein you are used to, have a soy compound drink in the morning until your body returns to normal. There are also nowadays soy compound powders that will provide you with the eight essential amino acids, those that the body cannot make and must be sought from outside.

Transition diet

People who have been eating junk food for some time need a transition diet so that the system is not hit too hard by the change just start by adding more fruit and vegetables to your diet until the system is strong enough to take natural food again.

Foods to be avoided

Meat: our systems can only take meat once in a blue moon. If we abuse our bodies by eating meat at every meal we will become like the animals for which meat was intended. Dogs have a very small intestinal tract and their food only stays in there (or around three hours. This is the time that it takes for the meat to go completely putrid, but by that time it has passed through their vital parts. When we eat meat it takes around 16 hours or more for the food to pass through our intestines. If we eat vegetables, it takes around 20 hours for this food to decompose inside the body and by this time it has passed and is harmless.

Dairy products: It is my belief that adults need no dairy produce at all. We stop producing lactase around the age of two, and our ability to digest milk is greatly reduced. Milk is for babies. Butter was originally used to stop the spread of disease when white bread was first introduced; it was a medicine, as was peanut butter, and could only be bought from a chemist. Cheese is one of the most detrimental foods and I insist my students and patients give it up — it literally causes the body to grind to a halt.

Peanuts and rhubarb: Peanuts are not nuts at all, and rhubarb is not an herb when only the stalk is used. Both contain oxalic acid, which attacks the kidneys and liver.

Comfrey: Comfrey should only be used externally as it contains a deadly alkaloid which is also detrimental to the kidneys and liver. The Government has recently legislated against the use of comfrey internally and rightly so. My father, a 'health nut' long before it became fashionable, used to blend up a large jug of his 'green drink' containing mainly comfrey, parsley and spinach. All of these herbs can be harmful if taken in such quantities. He died of massive liver and kidney failure.

The body is a wonderful factory but it needs constant maintenance. If we put the good stuff in, it will never let us down, but if we abuse it then we must bear the consequences. If we combine all that nature (God) has given us; we will eventually get back to just being 'PEOPLE' again. Education, eating, loving, sleeping and communicating should all be taught by the parents. Start with the food and you are half way there.

Food as medicine

Many people now take food which was originally meant for medicine and use it in great quantities, causing abnormalities in the body e.g. garlic, onions, parsley and many other herbs and spices we use liberally to disguise the taste of artificial food. You will notice that most people need some sort of sauce to disguise the taste of meat.

A good Chinese chef is also considered to be a doctor, and sometimes a traditional Chinese doctor will prescribe certain foods to heal. Here are a few helpful suggestions for using food as medicine:

Apples

Apples reinforce the heart, invigorate the ch'i, produce body fluid and help indigestion, prevent and aid recovery from tiredness. Apples are the fruit of the Gods! They really do keep the doctor away!

Diarrhoea: Eat only mashed raw apple for two to three days.

Slight diarrhoea: Wash, peel and core 1 kilo of apples. Mash into sauce and take 100 gms four times a day Alternatively take 16 gms of dried apple powder mixed with warm water three times a day when stomach is empty Give babies under one year half a teaspoon of apple juice four times a day

Constipation: Eat one or two apples early in the morning and at night when the stomach is empty.

High blood pressure: drink 100 gms of fresh apple juice three times a day for ten days. Don't eat the skin.

Grapes

Grapes are good for the tendons and bones, are used to treat rheumatic pains, painful urination, and will give tolerance to the wind and cold. The grape root and leaves are

sometimes prescribed for morning sickness and vomiting, and to soothe and protect the foetus.

Hoarseness: Take one small wine glass of grape juice plus one small glass of honey Mix together and drink with water three times a day

Chronic gastritis: Drink 15 mls of red grape wine three times a day

Poor appetite: Eat 9 gms of raisins or sultanas before meals. **High blood pressure:** Take equal amounts of grape juice and celery juice mixed with water three times a day

Anaemia: Drink red grape juice three times a day

Oranges and tangerines

Tangerine pith dissolves sputum is good for palpitations, chest pain and the treatment of pleuritis. Tangerine seeds are used for stomach hernia, painful testes, swollen testes and mastitis. The leaves promote ch'i circulation, soothe the liver ch'i, remove swelling and counter toxins.

Common cold: Put 30 gms of fresh, or 15 gms dry tangerine peel into three cups of water. Reduce over heat to two cups, and then add honey to taste. Drink one cup immediately and reheat and drink the other after half an hour

Upset stomach: Eat dried orange peel.

Vomiting: Take 9 gms of orange peel and a handful of rice. Cook to a watery mixture; when cool add ginger juice and drink.

Chronic gastritis: Dry bake tangerine peel and crush into a powder Take 6 gms with honey

Mastitis: Mix 30 gms fresh tangerine seeds with millet wine. Stir and add 3 bowls of water Reduce to half and drink as two drinks. This is the internal application. Externally mash fresh tangerine seeds and mix with vinegar into a paste which can be applied to the area. Change twice a day.

Hernia, swelling or pain in the testes: Stir bake tangerine seeds until they smell fragrant. Grind into powder. Take 3 to 9 gms each time with hot millet wine.

Pears

Pear syrup is used to cure coughing, moisten the lungs, disperse sputum, cool the heart, counter toxic effects of mercury, and dispel phlegm. The flowers, leaves, root and skin are used in various Chinese herbal remedies.

Coughing: Scrape out the pips and put 60 gms of honey into the hole. Steam and eat before sleep.

Alternatively, chop the pear into pieces, boil with honey and drink.

Bronchitis: Boil the pear with 10 gms of pepper, and drink.

Hiccups and food regurgitation: Scoop out the stones and put 15 cloves inside the pear. Cover with foil and bake. Remove the cloves and eat the pear.

Jaundice: Wash and chop two pears and immerse in vinegar for two days. Remove pear from vinegar and eat. Take three times a day i.e. six pears per day.

Watermelon

Watermelon relieves irritability; stops thirst from sunstroke, is good for sore throat caused by pharyngitis or tonsillitis, can be used as a diuretic, and detoxifies the urine. Cools fire in the heart. (Talking too much, ulcers in the mouth etc.)

Be careful not to use too much melon as it can dilute the gastric juices.

Burns: Grind dried watermelon rind to a powder and mix with sesame oil and apply to burn.

Prevention of sunstroke: boil the skin and drink as a tea.